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WHAT'S NEWS IN THE MARKETS?

(USDA Food Bulletin for the week ending Aug. 2, 1946)

SAN FRANCISCO, July 30 -- It's peaches again! They are the best fruit buy with supplies fairly heavy and wholesale prices relatively low. The principal variety available now is the Strawberry white peach.

Also in plentiful supply and an equally good buy is that smooth-skinned sister to the peach -- the nectarine. Prices are moderate.

Canning varieties of plums are abundant on the market now and it's about the last call for canning on apricots. Both Blenheim and Royal apricots are in moderate supply and make good canners.

Finishing up the parade of good buys are Klondike and Striped watermelons. They are lower priced, too.

Thompson Seedless grapes are now fairly plentiful and prices have dropped considerably from last week.

Gravenstein apples from Sonoma county and Sacramento Valley, along with moderate supplies of figs are down in price from a week ago.

With the return of O.P.A. price ceilings, Bartlett pears, grapefruit, and oranges are selling at lower prices. Oranges are still running mostly to medium and small sizes.

This week's main characters in the vegetable plate scene are liberal supplies of snap beans, plenty of red and yellow onions, potatoes, and that squash family of Summer, Italian, and Crookneck members.

And into the salad bowl can go good quality cucumbers at lower prices, a better supply of tomatoes at a bit lower price, and plenty of good quality Bell peppers.

The liberal flow of livestock into the South San Francisco wholesale livestock market is at the ratio of slightly more cattle for beef, about the same amount of calves, a few more hogs, but less sheep. Wholesale prices on cattle are still on a downward swing, while retail stores are well stocked with beef. Some retailers have been cancelling orders with the report that demand is slow. The quality is ranging from Commercial to Good. Hog prices are still steadily going up. Pork is still scarce, with practically no more smoked ham and bacon available than was to be found last June. Wholesale prices on sheep are slightly higher than they were. Lamb supplies are adequate to meet all needs. Ewe mutton is hard to move. Lamb is ranging in Commercial to Choice quality.

The consumer butter story is a slow moving one. During this past week, wholesale butter sales to retailers were less than for the previous week. Jobbing prices are lower in sympathy with lower prices on Eastern markets, while there is a wide range in retail prices. With an accumulation of supplies on hand, the San Francisco Mercantile Exchange resumed trading in butter Monday, July 29, for the first time since October, 1942.

Lighter supplies of eggs are in moderate demand. Last week wholesale prices on Grade "AA" and "A" Large and Medium eggs went up 2 cents per dozen and up 1 cent on Grade "B" Large eggs.

All classes of poultry are in plentiful supply. Demand is slow with consumers favoring the red meats. However, yesterday large fryers were in better demand. Last week wholesale prices on both live and dressed poultry dropped from 1 to 2 cents per pound.

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WHAT'S NEWS IN THE MARKETS?

(USDA Food Bulletin for the week ending Aug. 9, 1946)

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 6 -- Peaches, grapes, and watermelons are tops this week in fruit buys. They are plentiful, good quality, and reasonably priced on the wholesale market.

Can the peaches should be every housewife's desire. The principal variety on the market now is the J.H. Hale -- a freestone of high quality and a good canner. In addition there's still quite a few Elberta and Strawberry peaches to be had, along with a few clingstone peaches from the Sacramento and Santa Clara valleys.

Seedless grapes and watermelons of Klondike and Striped variety are both abundant now at prices about the same as last week.

In a jam should go plums -- that is if sugar's available. Santa Rosa and Satsuma plums are both good for making jam and preserves. There's a host of other varieties on the market.

Nectarines are beginning to get scarce at higher prices and apricots are about at their season's end.

Figs are slightly higher priced, but white Kadotas and Calimyrnas are beginning to make their appearance.

Salad bowl favorites this week are crisp Bell peppers and cucumbers in plentiful supply and priced right.

Potatoes, particularly those good Red Bliss Triumphs, onions in an array of red, yellow, and white, slightly higher priced snap beans, and good quality Italian squash are all abundant to tempt vegetable appetites.

(MORE)

On the South San Francisco wholesale livestock market, this week's supply of cattle is less than last week and contains a good portion of low-grade cows. Commercial to Good steer and heifer beef is about equal to demand. Prices are lower. About the same amount of calves are available to see a liberal slaughter of veal of Commercial to Choice quality. There's a good demand for the better grades. During the past week, about twice as many hogs arrived on the market. However, prices are still upward bound. A better supply of fresh pork is at hand, but supplies of both hams and bacon are still below demand. Fewer sheep are appearing on the market. Prices are lower. Toward the end of last week, demand for Good and Choice grade lamb brisked up, but ewe mutton continued to sell slowly.

Butter prices on the wholesale market are holding up in line with higher prices on Eastern markets. Consumer demand is slightly improved, but retail stores have ample supplies to meet all needs at prices ranging from 77 to 83 cents per pound.

Eggs are up another cent (wholesale) on large and medium sizes. Fresh, top quality eggs are scarce and in good demand. Small eggs are in plentiful supply at the same prices.

Poultry is still taking second place in relation to the red meats. While fryers are enjoying a better demand at prices up one cent, broilers, fowl, and rabbits are all standing by. There's an abundant supply of all classes now, but reports indicate that before too long supplies of young chickens will be smaller. A reduction in hatchery operations is the reason.

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WHAT'S NEWS IN THE MARKETS?

(USDA Food Bulletin for the week ending Aug. 16, 1946)

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 13 -- Topping the list of best fruit buys this week, we find peaches, grapes, watermelons, and cantaloups.

Good quality J.H. Hale peaches are in heavy supply. They are freestones and the call for canning is urgent because they ripen rapidly and won't be on the market too long.

Seedless grapes are plentiful at prices about the same as last week.

Both Klondike and Striped watermelons are in liberal supply and the best melon buy, even though prices are slightly higher. In addition, fair to good quality cantaloups are abundant and selling below ceiling.

Plums are plentiful on the wholesale market now and can be found in a wide range of varieties. One of the best right now is the Standard Prune — a good canning variety. Prices are a little lower than last week.

Among the vegetables now abundant and in the good buy class, we find eggplant, celery lower priced, dry onions up just a little in price, lots of cucumbers, and peppers at prices unchanged from last week.

Cabbage and cauliflower head the list of second best vegetable buys. And to keep them company there's plenty of lettuce of quality ranging from fair to good on a slightly lower price, potatoes slightly higher priced, and heavier supplies of tomatoes at lower prices. The bulk of the tomato supply is coming from Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties, but a few from the Sacramento Valley are beginning to arrive so that we can look for more tomatoes soon.

(MORE)

This week's supply of cattle and calves on the South San Francisco wholesale livestock market is about the same as for last week, but there are less hogs and sheep. In general, retail stores are well stocked with all classes of fresh meats. Average retail prices are down a little from the peak of mid-July. A more liberal beef slaughter finds demand very good for steer and heifer beef, with wholesale prices up from a week ago. Available offerings of veal are equal to demand. A lighter lamb and mutton kill sees demand good for the supply of Good and Choice lamb, while ewe mutton has enjoyed only a moderate demand for the past two weeks. Wholesale prices are up from last week. Pork cuts are more plentiful with wholesale prices on hogs down a little.

There's not too much change in the butter picture. Supplies are light but fully equal to demand, which is best for top grades. Prices are holding up with prices on Eastern markets. Reports show San Francisco wholesale butter sales to retailers to be 40 percent below last year.

Top quality eggs are scarce and unable to meet demand. Wholesale prices are up another cent on all grades of medium and large eggs. Meanwhile, small eggs are plentiful, little wanted, and unchanged in price.

Lighter poultry receipts on the wholesale market are moving under a slightly improved demand, with the exception of small broilers. Roasters are fairly scarce. The wholesale price to retailers is up 1 to 2 cents on dressed roasters. On Leghorn hens, wholesale live prices are up 1 cent on small hens and 1½ cents on large, while dressed prices are up 1 to 2 cents.

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WHAT'S NEWS IN THE MARKETS?

(USDA Food Bulletin for the week ending Aug. 23, 1946)

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 20, 1946 — Looking at the scoreboard this week for a list of the best fruit buys, we find that peaches head the list with melons following close behind, particularly watermelons, Persians, and honey dews. Those coming in second in the race for top honors are Thompson seedless grapes, Gravenstein apples and Bartlett pears.

On the canning side of the picture, plan on getting those peaches and pears under glass soon. Peaches are in plentiful supply right now and Bartlett pears are right for canning. Don't wait too long or the supply will disappear.

It's good news that Gravenstein apples are now coming into the market in moderate supply at a slightly lower price. These are perfect for a deep dish apple pie.

Cantaloup is selling below ceiling but the news of the week is the lower price on Persians and Honey Dews in the wholesale market. And don't forget that lemon juice brings out the flavor of these melons.

On the scarce and high priced side of the scoreboard we find avocados.

Eggplant, cucumbers, onions and bell peppers lead the vegetable list of best buys with potatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, celery and tomatoes crowding them for top listing.

Eggplant takes the honors this week as it is of good quality and the price is right. This is a vegetable that lends itself to many variations. Try it scalloped, sliced and fried, or stuffed.

Celery is down a bit in price and the supply is fairly good and there are plenty of cucumbers around at a low price. The quality and the price on lettuce is right. The price of potatoes has gone up a bit but the quality is good. Some sweet potatoes are arriving at the market in greater numbers and the price is right. Peas aren't so good right now as they are getting a little elderly, and artichokes are not only scarce but also high in price.

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A quick glance at the meat picture shows that at the end of last week supplies were very low in the coolers. Retailers bought to take care of the current week's demand but were holding back on buying supplies for the future pending settlement of price control. The demand was greatest for choice cuts which were not in large supply. Pork prices at the slaughter house were up to a point where they were equal to any time back to 1926 and as a consequence pork cuts and smoked meat prices were upset, even though there was a broad demand with liberal supplies. The largest supplies of beef were in the commercial and utility grades. A few more heavy calves were slaughtered this last week than the previous week, but choice veal was scarce. As far as lamb is concerned, choice spring lamb was scarce and in greatest demand while retailers were not asking for the commercial and utility grades.

Best news on butter is that we now have a more even distribution of available supplies. The demand was noticeably improved and sales were slightly higher. 90-score or lower grade butter went down in price on the wholesale market.

Consumers in the San Francisco Bay area were demanding more eggs than were available. The shortage is probably due to the lack of egg candlers and seasonally lower production. Prices were higher on all top quality eggs.

Heavy broilers, roasters and large Leghorn hens went up in price this last week and as a whole were in moderate demand. Forget fried rabbit for the time being as domestic rabbit supplies were very short.

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WHAT'S NEWS IN THE MARKETS?

(USDA Food Bulletin for the week ending Aug. 30, 1946)

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 27, 1946 -- Thrift-minded homemakers in the Bay Area will put these best buys in fruits and vegetables on their current shopping lists -- eggplant, dry onions, tomatoes, nectarines, prunes and watermelons.

And now is the time to finish up peach canning, with good supplies expected for only a week or ten days longer. The increasing volume of Bartlett pears at below ceiling prices puts them on the home-canning list, too.

Gravenstein apples, honeydew and Persian melons are also in good supply. Apples are selling at less than ceiling prices. Good supplies of Thompson seedless grapes are now winding up their 1946 season.

In fact, there's all the makings of a delicious fruit salad in this week's list of plentiful fruits. Combine grapes, diced apples, melon cubes, peach and pear slices on lettuce leaves and pour over a little french dressing. For a one-dish lunch on a warm day, place these fruits around a mound of cottage cheese.

On the scarce side, shoppers will find cantaloupes and avocados. Citrus fruits are in sufficient supply, but a little higher in price -- although small-sized oranges are below ceiling and more plentiful, which recommends this variety for juice.

Eggplant, at very low prices, is No. 1 buy in vegetables, with dry onions running a close second. Eggplant slices, dipped in egg and breadcrumbs and browned in bacon fat until tender, are suggested to win new friends for this often-neglected vegetable. Fairly good supplies of lettuce and cucumbers warrant frequent serving of the summer favorite in salads, in combination with tomatoes, peppers and celery. Cabbage, cauliflower and potatoes are in fairly good supply. More sweet potatoes, yam-type, are coming to market. Iced carrots are down in price and moderate in supply. Crookneck squash is the most plentiful and reasonably-priced of summer squash varieties, with other types in lower supply and at higher prices than during past weeks.

(OVER)

More beef at slightly lower prices is coming into wholesale markets at South San Francisco, after last week's rise in prices and heavy drop in supplies. Considerable beef of Commercial and Utility grades is available, with some Good and a limited amount of Choice. Housewives need to remember that Commercial and Utility grades require long cooking in moist heat and are best in stews, potroasts, and similar dishes. More pork is also available following limited marketings last week, and wholesale prices took a heavy drop early this week. Ample supplies of fresh veal at reasonable prices deserve more attention from shoppers. Good to Choice grades of spring lamb are in ample supply, at even prices. Mutton seems to be the "forgotten food" among consumers, with supplies fairly good and demand light. Cool weather and reasonable prices call for mutton stew and dumplings, as one way to help balance the food budget.

Consumers will probably notice results of recontrolled prices on meat in another week or so. Retail ceilings go on September 9, while wholesale ceilings are set for September 5 and ceilings on live animals are in effect August 29.

Very little butter is coming in, but it's enough to fill consumers' needs at present prices. Wholesale prices have gone up slightly.

Most eggs are coming out of storage, as fresh production hits its usual Fall slump. Prices have gone up on all grades. Receipts are light and late-in-the-day shoppers may have some trouble finding eggs in retail stores.

Fewer dressed and live poultry are coming to market this week, following the heavy supplies and poor to moderate demand of last week. Prices are about the same. More new crop turkeys are arriving, and the 1946 crop promises to be well above average.